Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

Let no reader skip, because of its length, G. Bernard Shaw's essay on "Proprietors and Their Slaves," printed on another page.

Whatever the carpers may say, the word Anarchy is rapidly vindicating itself. No other word could have given such an impetus to the gospel of Liberty in so short a time.

A correspondent of the "Truth Seeker," Seward Mitchell, sensibly reminds the editor of that paper that true liberalism, instead of making "Nine Demands," makes only one, "the immediate repeal of all laws now on the statute books of the national and the several state legislatures, and that legislators stop making laws."

It is with great regret that I learn of the dangerous illness of Stephen Pearl Andrews, one of the mental giants and free spirits of this age. I have long been accustomed to assert that his work, "The Science of Society," is the most important political and economical work ever printed in the English language. It is a great pity that it was ever allowed to drop out of sight. That work alone entitles him to immortal life in human memory. That his mortal life may not be cut off while there is yet left in him capacity for usefulness or enjoyment is the earnest, hearty wish that Liberty sends to his bed of suffering.

Herr Most advises me to put myself in correspondence with the publishers of the Spanish journal, "Revista Social," whereby I will find out, he says, that the Anarchists of Spain, contrary to my recent statement, are Communists. If this is the case, these gentlemen are not in their correspondence what they are in their published articles. The article, for instance, quoted in the last number of Liberty distinctly stated that they are not Communists, but believers in the motto, "To each according to his works." For Most to assert that he too believes in this motto, Communist though he is, is absurd in the extreme, for the words of the motto unmistakably imply individual and inviolable possession, something not at all consistent with Most's plan of seizing all wealth and administering it in the interests of the people collectively.

To a letter from a Congregationalist clergyman asking me this question: "Has the Church any special duty in view of the present development of Socialism?" I recently sent the following reply: "I thank you for your polite note, and ask your pardon for my delay in answering it. You are correct in supposing me a believer in Socialism, and, I hope, a 'wise' one. But the kind of Socialism that I believe in is an Anarchistic Socialism which utterly rejects all forms of authority, including the source and sustenance of these forms, the God-idea. This Socialism, therefore, while it leaves perfect freedom of religious belief, contemplates the entire disappearance of religion and all its institutions by the operation of the principle of the survival of the fittest. Hence Socialism means death to the Church. What the duty of the Church, then, is to such a movement is hardly for me to say. The instinct of self-preservation must lead it to oppose Socialism tooth and nail. It can hardly be called the duty of any person or institution to violate this instinct. But, if really disposed to sacrifice itself for the benefit of the race, then its duty would seem to be to study the doctrines of Socialism till it thoroughly understands them and then promulgate them with all its might. What these doctrines are I cannot explain in this letter, but you will find them expounded in the columns of Liberty, a journal of which I now send you specimen copies, and more especially and elaborately in the books advertised therein."

"A member of the family of the sister of the late Charles O'Conor," says the "Truth Seeker," "denies that the distinguished lawyer was ever an Anarchist in his views, or that he declined the proffered services of a priest at his death-bed." The fact that numerous published writings by Charles O'Conor are flatly Anarchistic is sufficient to convict this far-fetched relative of ignorance in the premises; as for the priest matter, I distinctly reaffirm on indubitable evidence the statement formerly made in these columns. To those who still doubt Mr. O'Conor's Anarchism let me recommend Henry Appleton's letter in another column. It was originally written for the "Century" in answer to a slander which John Bigelow had been allowed to heap upon O'Conor's memory in its pages, but that magazine had not the fairness to print the refutation.

The friends of conservatism in finance are making a great handle of the inventory of Wendell Phillips's estate. It appears that this great man's once large property had dwindled at the time of his death to some eight thousand dollars, plus several wagon-loads of worthless mining stocks. Immediately goes up the hue-and-cry. "What a crazy-head was this Greenbacker!" shout the bankers. "What a child in finance was this champion of the rag-baby!" exclaim the sapient economists who sit in editorial chairs. Such is the penalty of failure! That Wendell Phillips was a victim of the speculative mania there is little doubt; that during the latter part of his life he was continually dabbling in stocks, and sometimes much more than dabbling, is the testimony of the money-kings of State street. But what of it? What has this to do with the soundness of his ideas in political economy? As if, indeed, the hard-money men themselves do not, many of them, spend the greater part of their lives in similar speculations and on a much larger scale, with results ranging from the enormous success of a Gould to the humiliating failure of a Phillips and worse! But who thinks of testing the hard-money theory by the size of a Gould's fortune (except in the general sense that such a fortune can only be accumulated by some system of robbery)? Or suppose that one of Phillips's mining ventures had turned out well and given him an immense fortune, as it might easily have done. Would this have made Greenbackism true or turned the rag-baby into an infant princess? By no means. The truth is that there is little in common between the essential qualities of a successful speculator and those of a clear-seeing social philosopher. The success of a speculator or business man depends largely on chance and largely on temperament; the shrewdest often go under, and the stupidest often succeed. But the wisdom of a philosopher depends principally on his brains, for which there is no substitute. Liberty has no faith in Greenbackism and never regarded Wendell Phillips as a profound thinker, but its opinion of his merits in this respect can never be influenced by the fact that he was not a favorite of fortune in games of chance.

GOD'S USELESS WORK.

[London Justice.]

"What animal is that, papa, which looks so much like man?"
(Thus to papa, a little child of tender years began.)
"A monkey 'tis, my child, I think. You saw it in the Zoo'?"
"O no, papa, 'twas in the street: it looked so much like you!"

"I see them very often, pa, in numbers great and small,
And all so wretched looking, whether short, or tall.
They wear a rag to cover them, not clothes, like you and I;
I scarce can ever look at them, but that it makes me cry.

"And oh, such wretched food they eat, it really makes me sad
To see them work so very hard and fare so very bad.
Our horse and dog have better food, I think a better bed;
I think that these poor animals would be much better dead.

"That's one, papa, that black one there, that makes the engine puff,
That's one within the sewer throwing out that nasty stuff,
And one that drags upon a cart our groceries and coal,
Just like a horse; 'tis good, poor thing, he has not got a soul."

"My child! my child, you must not talk like that!" papa began,
"It's not an animal, my child, but a poor hard-working man.
Although sometimes he grunts and growls, and calls himself a slave,
Thank God, we do the best we can his wretched soul to save."

"Who made the poor men poor, papa?" "My child, you know
that well,
God made us all, some rich (to rule), some poor, his power to tell."
"'T was good of God to make us rich; I thank him too, but then
Why DID he make jackasses when there were working men?"

Cosmopolite.

The Reward of Manliness.

[Boston Globe.]

A small head, covered with a thick mass of black hair, rested squarely on the shoulders of Michael Healey, as he arose before Judge Parmenter of the Municipal Court yesterday, in answer to the charge of idle and disorderly conduct. His bright eyes and rough garb made him look like the pictures of Hugo's Jean Valjean.

"I'm not guilty, sor," said he. "It is going on five weeks that I've tried to get work for $1.50 a day, an' nary a job can I find."

"Well, well," remarked the judge, "can you get a job for $1 a day?"

"Oh yes, yer honor, but me price is $1.50, an' I'll starve before I'll work for less. I'm an honest, poor man, sor, whose price is $1.50, sor; and I won't work for less, sor; so there, sor."

"Four months at the house of correction," said the clerk.

"An' I'll not thank ye for that, sor," was his reply.

Paint Me As I Am.

To the Editor of Liberty:

I do not like to be over-captious as to names that are associated with my own in works of good intent, especially when names like Victor Hugo and Wendell Phillips are among them. I decline, however, while according good faith to the teachings of Karl Marx and Henry George, to be cited with them as voicing social theories to which I am radically and uncompromisingly opposed. I regard State Socialism as an utterly illogical and pernicious delusion, and especially its application in the land nationalization schemes of George. I desire to be rated a close-communion Individualist, as to all reform affiliation,—a flat repudiator of all schemes which propose to recognize or utilize the State, no matter under what guise the old hulk is to be remodelled or re-manned. I have left this politically rat-eaten craft forever, and shipped under the flag of Liberty for an able-bodied Anarchist.

HENRY APPLETON.

The Next Question.

[Galveston Daily News.]

Some hundreds of years ago it was supposed that a country could not do without a personal ruler and a state religion. The next question is, can it do without a party boss system,—a party president at the top and party postmasters at the bottom, with majority tyranny, sumptuary laws, and government intermeddling with labor and commerce all the way between.

WHAT'S TO BE DONE?

A ROMANCE.

By N. G. TCHERNYCHEWSKY.
Translated by Benj. R. Tucker.

Continued from No. 61.

Soon he saw that among his comrades there were some especially intelligent who did not think as the others did, and having learned the names of five or six of them (they were few in number), he interested himself in them and cultivated the acquaintance of one of them, who was no other than Kirsanoff, and his transformation into the rigorist, into Nikitouchka Lomoff, into an uncommon man, began. He listened to Kirsanoff with passionate eagerness. The first evening that they spent together he wept; he interrupted Kirsanoff with exclamations of hatred against that which must die and enthusiastic panegyrics of that which must endure.

"With what books should I begin?" said he.

Kirsanoff informed him on this point. The next morning at eight o'clock he walked up and down the Nevsky between the Place de l'Amirauté and the Pont de Police, awaiting the opening of a French and German book-store where he could buy what he wanted. He read three days and nights continuously, from Thursday at eleven in the morning till Sunday at nine in the evening,—eighty-two hours in all. To keep him awake the first two nights his will alone sufficed; to keep awake the third night he drank eight cups of very strong coffee; the fourth night his strength failed him, the coffee had no effect, he fell on the floor, and slept there about fifteen hours. A week later he came to Kirsanoff to ask him for the titles of some new books and explanations concerning the books he had just read; he became united with him in bonds of friendship, and through him with Lopoukhoff.

Six months later, although but seventeen years old, while they were already twenty-one, he was treated by them as an equal, and became thenceforth an uncommon man.

What circumstances had helped him to become an uncommon man?

His father was very intelligent, very well-informed, and ultra-conservative,—in this like Maria Alexevna, only more respectable. So far as his father went, then, the son's life was certainly a painful one. If this were all, however, it would be nothing. But his mother, a rather delicate woman, suffered from the trying character of her husband; besides, he was a witness of the life of the peasantry. And even this would be nothing. But, when about fifteen years old, he became amorous of one of his father's mistresses. Connected with this there was a story, relating principally, be it understood, to the mistress. He greatly pitied the woman, who, thanks to him, had suffered so much. Ideas soon began to travel vaguely through his head, and to him Kirsanoff was what Lopoukhoff had been to Véra Pavlovna. His past life may have counted for something, it is true, in the formation of his character; but he could not have become what he was going to be if he had not been specially endowed by nature. Some time before he left the University to go first to his estate and then on his journey through Russia he had already adopted special rules for the government of his physical, moral, and intellectual life; and on his return these rules had been transformed into a complete system, to which he always held unchangeably. He had said to himself: "I will not drink a single drop of wine. I will not touch a woman." Why this resolution? So extreme a course was not at all necessary. "It must be," said he; "we demand that men may have a complete enjoyment of their lives, and we must show by our example that we demand it, not to satisfy our personal passions, but for mankind in general; that what we say we say from principle and not from passion, from conviction and not from personal desire."

For the same reason he forced himself to lead a very austere life. To become and to remain Nikitouchka Lomoff he had been obliged to eat meat, much meat, and he ate it in large quantities. But he looked long at a kopeck spent for any other food than meat; consequently he ordered his landlady to get the best of meat, the best pieces for him, while all the other food that he ate at home was of the cheapest. He gave up white bread, and ate only black bread at his table. For whole weeks he did not taste sugar, for months together he did not touch fruit or veal or poultry, nor did he buy anything of the kind: "I have no right to spend money on a whim which I need not gratify." Yet he had been brought up on a luxurious diet and had a keen taste, as could be seen from his remarks about food when dining out: he ate with relish many dishes which he denied himself at his own table, while there were others which he ate nowhere, and this for a well-founded reason: "Whatever the people eat, though only at intervals, I may eat also, when occasion offers. I must not eat that which is entirely out of the reach of the common people. This is necessary in order that I may feel, though but in a very slight degree, how much harder is the life of the common people than my own." So, when fruits were served, he always ate apples, but never apricots: at St. Petersburg he ate oranges, but refused them in the provinces. Because at St. Petersburg the common people eat them, which is not the case in the provinces. He ate sweets because a good cake is no worse than pie, and pie made of puff-paste is known to the common people; but he did not eat sardines. He was always poorly clad, though fond of elegance, and in all other things lived a Spartan's life; for instance, he allowed himself no mattress and slept on felt without so much as doubling it up.

But he had one thing to trouble his conscience; he did not leave off smoking. "Without my cigar I cannot think: if that is a fact, it is not my fault; but perhaps it is due to the weakness of my will." He could not smoke bad cigars, having been brought up amid aristocratic surroundings, and he spent money for cigars at the rate of three hundred and seventy-five roubles a thousand. "Abominable weakness," as he expressed it. But it was only this weakness that made it possible for him to repel his assailants. An adversary, cornered, would say to him: "Perfection is impossible; even you smoke." Then Rakhmétoff redoubled his attacks, but aimed most of his reproaches at himself, his opponent receiving less yet without being quite forgotten. He succeeded in doing a great deal, since in the employment of his time he imposed equally strict rules upon himself. He did not lose a quarter of an hour, and had no need of rest.

"My occupations are varied; change of occupation is a rest."

The circle of friends which had its centre in Kirsanoff and Lopoukhoff he visited only just often enough to enable him to keep on an intimate footing with its members.

So much was necessary; daily experience proves the usefulness of intimate relations with some circle or other of men; one must always have under his hand open sources for all sorts of information. Aside from the meetings of this circle, he never visited any one except on business, and nowhere did he stay five minutes longer than his business required; likewise, at home, he neither received any one nor allowed any one to stay except on these conditions. He said plainly to his visitor: "Our conversation is finished. Now let me occupy myself with something else, for my time is precious."

During the first months of his new birth he spent almost all his time in reading; but that lasted only a little more than half a year; when he saw that he had acquired a systematic method of thinking in the line of the principles which he had found to be true, he instantly said to himself: "Henceforth reading is a secondary thing; so far as that is concerned I am ready for life," and he began the habit of devoting to books only such time as he had left after attending to his other business,—that is, very little time. In spite of that the range of his knowledge extended with an astonishing rapidity; at the age of twenty-two he was already a learned man. In this matter, too, he imposed rules upon himself.

"No luxury, no caprices; nothing but the necessary. Now, what is necessary? Upon each subject there are only a very few first-class works; in all the others there are nothing but repetitions, rarefactions, modifications of that which is more fully and more clearly expressed in these few. There is no need of reading any but these; all other reading is but a useless expenditure of time. Take, for example, Russian *belles lettres*. I say to myself: 'First I will read all of Gogol's works.' In the thousands of other novels I have only to read five lines on five different pages to see that I shall find nothing in them but Gogol spoiled. Then what is the use of reading them?"

It was the same in economic science; there the line of demarkation was even more sharply drawn.

"If I have read Adam Smith, Malthus, Ricardo, and Mill, I know the alpha and omega of this school: I do not need to read a single one of the hundreds of economists, however great their celebrity: from five lines taken from five pages I see that I shall not find in them a single new thought that belongs to them. All that they say is borrowed and distorted. I read only that which is original, and I read it only so far as is necessary in order to know this originality."

Consequently there was no way of inducing him to read Macaulay; after spending a quarter of an hour in reading several pages, he said to himself: "I know the quality of these rags." He read, and with pleasure, Thackeray's "Vanity Fair," and began to read "Pendennis," but closed the book at the twentieth page.

"It is all in 'Vanity Fair;' he has nothing more to say; hence to read him further is useless. Each of the books that I have read is of such a character as to relieve me of the necessity of reading hundreds of others," said he.

Gymnastics, labor for the development of his strength, and reading were Rakhmétoff's personal occupations, but after his return to St. Petersburg they took but a quarter of his time; the rest of the time he occupied in the affairs of some one else or in matters not relating especially to his own person, always holding to the rule by which he governed his reading,—not to spend time on secondary matters and with second-rate men, but to attend only to important matters and important men. For instance, outside of his circle, he made the acquaintance of no men save those that had an influence over others. A man who was not an authority for several others could by no means enter into conversation with him. He said, "Excuse me, I have no time," and went his way. Likewise, if he wished to make the acquaintance of any one, there was no way of getting rid of him. He came directly to you and said what he had to say with this introduction: "I wish to make your acquaintance; it is necessary. If you have no time now, fix some other time." To your minor affairs he lent no attention even though you were his most intimate friend and had begged him to take an interest in your concerns: "I have no time," he would say, turning away. But he concerned himself about important matters when in his opinion it was necessary, even though no one asked him to do so: "It is my duty," he would say. In all that he said and did he gave no heed to ceremony.

This, for instance, is the way in which I made his acquaintance. I was already past my youth and living very comfortably; so from time to time five or six young people of my locality were wont to meet at my house. This made me a precious man for him: these young people were well-disposed toward me, and they found in me a similar disposition toward them.

It was on such an occasion that he heard my name spoken. When I saw him for the first time at Kirsanoff's, I had never heard of him: it was shortly after his return from his travels. He came in after I did; I was the only member of the company whom he did not know. Scarcely had he entered when he took Kirsanoff aside and, pointing to me with his eyes, said a few words to him. Kirsanoff, too, said a few words in reply, and left him. A moment later Rakhmétoff sat down directly opposite me at a distance no greater than the width of a little table near the divan, perhaps an archine and a half; he began to look me in the face with all his might. I was irritated: he looked at me without the slightest ceremony, as if I were a portrait, and I frowned. That did not disturb him the least in the world. After having looked at me two or three minutes, he said to me: "M. N., I wish to make your acquaintance. I know you, but you do not know me. Go to Kirsanoff and those present in whom you have the most confidence, and ask them about me." This said, he rose and went into another room.

"Who is this original?"

"It is Rakhmétoff. He wishes you to inform yourself concerning him,—whether he deserves confidence unconditionally and whether he deserves consideration. He is worth more than all of us put together," said Kirsanoff, and the others bore him out.

Five minutes later he came back into the room where we all were. He did not try to talk with me, and talked but very little with the others; the conversation was not a learned one nor one of much importance. "Ah, ten o'clock already!" said he a little while later; "at ten o'clock I have business elsewhere. M. N. [he addressed himself to me], I must say a few words to you. When I took Kirsanoff aside to ask him who you were, I pointed you out with my eyes; even if I had not done so, you would have noticed that I was inquiring about you. Why should we not make the gestures that are natural in asking a question of this sort? When will you be at home to receive me?"

At that time I did not like to make new acquaintances, and, besides, this importunity did not please me at all.

"I only sleep in the house; I am not at home through the day."

"But you do sleep at home? What time do you enter to go to bed?"

"Very late."

"For instance?"

"Toward two or three o'clock."

"Very well, fix the hour."

"If you absolutely wish it, day after tomorrow, at half past three in the morning."

"Surely I ought to look upon your words as rude and insulting; however, it is possible that you have good reasons. In any case, I will be at your house day after tomorrow at half past three in the morning."

"If you are so bent upon it, come a little later instead; I shall be at home all the morning until noon."

"Good! I will call at ten o'clock. Will you be alone?"

"Yes."

"Good!"

He came, and with the same directness went straight to the matter concerning which he had felt the necessity of making my acquaintance. We talked about

half an hour. The subject of our conversation is of little consequence; it is enough to remember that he said, "It is necessary," and I answered, "No;" that he added, "You ought to," and I replied, "Not at all." At the end of the half-hour he said: "It is clear that it would be useless to continue. Are you convinced that I am a man worthy of absolute confidence?"

"Yes; all have told me so, and now I see it for myself."

"And in spite of all you persist in your opinion?"

"I persist."

"Do you know what follows from that? That you are either a liar or a man of little value!"

What do you say to that? What should one do to another who uses such language toward him? Provoke him to a duel? But he spoke so calmly, without any trace of personality, like a historian who judges things coldly, not with an intent to offend any one, but to serve the truth, that it would have been ridiculous to take offence, and I could only laugh.

"But these amount to the same thing," said I.

"In the present case they do not amount to the same thing."

"Then perhaps I am both at once."

"In the present case to be both at once is impossible. But one or the other,—certainly. Either you do not think and act as you speak, and in that case you are a liar; or you do think and act as you speak, and in that case you are a man of little value. One of the two,—certainly. The first, I suppose."

"Think as you please," said I, continuing to laugh.

"Good day. In any case remember that I keep my confidence in you, and am ready to resume our conversation whenever you see fit."

However queer this was, Rakhmétoff was perfectly right, both in having begun as he did, since he had inquired about me before approaching the matter, and in having ended the conversation in this way. In fact, I did not say what I thought, and he had the right to call me a liar; and "in the present case," as he expressed it, I could not take offence at or even exception to his words, the case being such that he could really keep his confidence in and even his esteem for me. Yes, however odd his manner, every man he dealt with was convinced that Rakhmétoff acted in precisely the most reasonable and most simple way, and his terrible insults, his terrible reproaches were so given that no sensible man could be offended at them; and, with all his phenomenal rudeness, he was at bottom very gentle. Consequently his prefaces were in this tone. He began every difficult explanation in this way:

"You know that I am going to speak without any personal feeling. If you find the words I am about to say to you disagreeable, I will ask you to forgive them. I simply think that one should not take offence at what is said conscientiously and with no intention of offending. For the rest, whenever it may seem to you useless to listen to my words, I will stop; it is my rule to propose my opinion wherever I ought to, and never to impose it."

And, in fact, he did not impose it: he could not be prevented from giving his opinion when he deemed it useful; but he did it in two or three words, and added: "Now you know what the end of our conversation would be; do you think it would be useful to discuss further?" If you said "No," he bowed and went his way.

That is how he talked and acted. He always had a great deal of business not relating to himself personally; personal matters he had none; that everybody knew; but what the matters were to which he gave his attention the members of his circle did not know. They simply saw that he had a multitude of concerns. He was rarely at home, and was always on the go, either on foot or in a cab, but generally on foot. At the same time he received many people, and for this purpose had made it a rule to be always at home from two o'clock till three. During this time he talked business and dined. But very often, for several days together, he did not go home, and then one of his friends, devoted to him body and soul and silent as a tomb, received his visitors for him. About two years after his entrance into Kirsanoff's study, where we now see him reading Newton's commentaries on the Apocalypse, he left St. Petersburg, after telling Kirsanoff and two or three of his most intimate friends that he had nothing more to do in the city, that he had done all that he could, that nothing more could be done for two or three years, and that consequently he was free for that length of time and wished to use it for the benefit of his future activity. We have learned since that he went to his old estate, sold the land remaining to him, received about thirty-five thousand roubles, went to Riazan and Moscow, and distributed about five thousand roubles among his seven bursars that they might finish their studies. And here ended his authentic history. What became of him after his departure from Moscow is not known. Several months went by, and no news came from him. Those who knew most about him no longer kept silence regarding several matters which, at his request, they had concealed during his stay among us. Then it was that the members of our circle learned that he had bursars, and the various other details about him which I have just given. We heard also a multitude of stories which, instead of making him better known to us, only rendered his character more problematical,—stories astonishing from their singularity, stories some of which flatly contradicted the opinion we had formed of him, as a man wholly without feeling, having, if I may so express myself, no heart beating with personal emotions. To relate all these stories would be out of place. I will give but two here,—one of each class,—one queer and the other upsetting the theory of his pretended hardness of heart. I choose them from those told me by Kirsanoff.

A year before he disappeared for the second and probably the last time from St. Petersburg Rakhmétoff said to Kirsanoff: "Give me a large quantity of salve good for healing wounds inflicted by sharp tools." Kirsanoff filled an enormous jar for him, thinking that Rakhmétoff intended to take it to a carpenters' shop or that of some other workmen liable to cuts. The next morning Rakhmétoff's landlady ran to Kirsanoff in great fright:

"Father* doctor, I do not know what has got into my tenant: he is late, he has not left his room, the door is locked; I looked through the crack of the door and saw him covered with blood; when I began to cry out, he said to me through the door: 'It is nothing, Agraféna Antonovna.' How can it be nothing! Save him, father doctor! Oh, how I fear lest he may die! He is so utterly without pity for himself."

Kirsanoff ran in all haste; Rakhmétoff opened his door, a broad and dismal smile on his lips. Kirsanoff saw a sight at which Agraféna Antonovna might well have been startled; others would have been. The back and sides of Rakhmétoff's shirt (he was in his shirt) were covered with blood; there was blood under the bed; the felt on which he slept was covered with blood; in the felt were hundreds of little nails, sticking up about an inch; Rakhmétoff had lain all night on this bed of his invention.

"Pray, what does this mean, Rakhmétoff?" cried Kirsanoff, thoroughly frightened.

"A trial. It was necessary to make it. Improbable, certainly, but at all events it was necessary to make it. I know now what I can do."

Besides what Kirsanoff saw, the landlady evidently could have told many curious things about Rakhmétoff, but in her innocence and simplicity the old woman doted on him, and it is needless to say that nothing could be learned from her. On this occasion she ran to Kirsanoff only because Rakhmétoff himself allowed her to do so for her own peace of mind, so bitterly did she weep, thinking that he intended to commit suicide.

Two months after this affair, at the end of the month of May, Rakhmétoff disappeared for a week or more, but no one remarked upon it, as it very often happened that he disappeared for several days. Later Kirsanoff told us the following story of the way in which Rakhmétoff spent his time while absent. It was the erotic episode of his life. His love grew out of an event worthy of Nikitouchka Lomoff. Rakhmétoff was going from Premier Pargolovo* to the city, in a thoughtful mood and with eyes lowered, as usual; when passing by the Institut Forestier, he was startled from his dreams by the harrowing cry of a woman. Raising his eyes, he saw that a horse, attached to a jaunting-car in which a lady sat, had taken the bits in his teeth and was running as fast as he could; the lady had dropped the reins, which were dragging along the ground; the horse was not more than two steps from Rakhmétoff; he threw himself into the middle of the road, but the horse passed rapidly by him before he could seize the bridle; he could only grasp the rear axle of the jaunting-car, which he stopped, though he fell himself. The passers-by ran to the spot helped the lady out of the jaunting-car, and picked up Rakhmétoff. His chest was slightly bruised, but his most serious injury was the loss of a good-sized piece of flesh which the wheel had torn from his leg. When the lady had recovered herself, she ordered him to be taken to her country-house, about half a verst distant. He consented, for he felt very weak, but he insisted that Kirsanoff be sent for, as he would have no other doctor. Kirsanoff decided that the bruises on his chest were not of serious consequence, but he found Rakhmétoff himself very weak from the loss of blood which he had suffered. He remained in bed ten days. Naturally, the lady whom he had saved cared for him herself. In view of his weakness he could only talk with her,—the time would have been lost at any rate,—so he spoke and for once without reserve. The lady was a young widow nineteen years old, moderately rich, independent, intelligent, and fine-looking. Rakhmétoff's ardent words (not of love, be it understood) charmed her.

"I see him in my dreams surrounded with a halo," said she to Kirsanoff. He also conceived a passion for her. From his exterior she thought him poor; consequently she was the first to propose marriage when on the eleventh day he rose and said that he could go home.

"With you I have been more outspoken than with others; you can see that men like me have not the right to bind their destiny to that of any one whomsoever."

"Yes, you are right," said she, "you cannot marry. But until you have to leave me, love me."

"No, I cannot accept that offer either; I am no longer free, and must not love."

What has become of this lady since? This adventure must have changed her life, and undoubtedly she became herself a person like Rakhmétoff. I should like to know it. But Kirsanoff did not wish to tell me her name, and he knew no more than I what she had become. Rakhmétoff had asked him not to inquire about her. "If I supposed that you knew anything about her," said he, "I could not help asking you for the facts, and that must not be." When the story was known, everybody remembered that at that time and for some two months afterwards Rakhmétoff was more sober than usual. With no matter what fury any one might throw in his face his abominable weakness, cigars, he did not pour out wrath upon himself, and no broad and gentle smile illuminated his countenance when any one flattered him with the name of Nikitouchka Lomoff. I have other memories. Three or four times that summer he happened to make answer to my ridicule (for I laughed at him when we were together, and that is why he took me into his affection):

"Yes, pity me; you are right, pity me. I, too, like the others, am not an abstract idea, but a man who wishes to live. However, it will pass away."

And in fact it did pass away. Once only, several months later, I so excited him by my raillery that he happened to say the same words over again.

The reader with the penetrating eye sees, perhaps, that I know more about Rakhmétoff than I say. It may be so. I dare not contradict him, for his eye is penetrating. If I only knew! I know many things that you, reader with the penetrating eye, can never learn. But what I really do not know is this,—where Rakhmétoff is now, what has become of him, and whether I shall ever see him again. About these matters I know no more than his other friends. Three or four months after his disappearance from Moscow we supposed, though we had heard nothing from him, that he was travelling in Europe. This conjecture seems to have been correct. At least it is confirmed by this evidence. A year after Rakhmétoff's disappearance one of Kirsanoff's acquaintances met in a railway carriage between Vienna and Munich a young Russian, who said that he had travelled through all the Slavonic countries, meeting all classes of society and staying in each country only as long *as it was necessary* in order to form a true conception of its ideas, its customs, its manner of life, its local institutions, its material condition, and the various branches of its population; that with this view he lived in cities and villages, going on foot from one village to another; that he had studied in the same way the Roumanians and the Hungarians; that he had travelled, now on foot and now by rail, through Northern Germany; that then he had visited in detail Southern Germany and the German provinces of Austria; that now he was going to Bavaria, and thence to Switzerland by way of Würtemberg and Baden; that afterwards he would go through France and England in the same way, which he counted on doing in a year; if there were enough of the year left, he would see also Spain and Italy; if not, he would not go there. Why? Because in a year it was absolutely necessary that he should be in the United States, a country which he must study more than any other. There he would remain a long time, perhaps more than a year, and perhaps forever should he find occupation there; but it was more likely that in three years he would return to Russia, as it seemed to him that at that time it would be necessary to be there. All this is much like Rakhmétoff, including the "it is necessarys" impressed upon the memory of the narrator. The age, the voice, the features of the traveller were also confirmatory indices; but the narrator had not paid much attention to his fellow-traveller, who moreover, had left him two hours later, descending from the train at a little village. Consequently the narrator gave only a vague description of his external appearance, so that the authenticity is not complete. It is also said that a young Russian, an ex-*seigneur*, once presented himself to one of the greatest European thinkers of our century, the father of the new German philosophy, and said to him: "I have thirty thousand thalers; I need but five thousand; the remainder I beg you to accept." The philosopher was living in great poverty.

"What for?"

"For the publication of your works."

The philosopher did not accept, but the Russian nevertheless deposited the money in his name at a banker's, and wrote him a note which read as follows:

Continued on page 6.

* A formula of respect in Russia among the people.

* A village in the suburbs of St. Petersburg.

Liberty.

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"A free man is one who enjoys the use of his reason and his faculties; who is neither blinded by passion, nor hindered or driven by oppression, nor deceived by erroneous opinions."—PROUDHON.

The True Genius of Anarchism.

In the last number of Liberty I condemned every manner of machine which it is proposed to set up, by which to take care of society at large,—alleging that, if the machine in reform is to be recognized, one machine is as good as another, because all are radically wrong in principle. I still maintain that whoever drafts a machine, with the intent of saddling the same upon all society, is no true Anarchist; but, on the contrary, violates the very basic principle of Anarchism.

"Ah, that is just it!" exclaimed a gentleman who had read the article. "That is just what Anarchy means. It means the absence of any system in society; it means chaos and pandemonium. It means nobody's rule, which is everybody's disorder. It will not tolerate an attempt, even among fanatics of its own ilk, to institute a system by which some kind of order is promised. Pure Anarchism craves the devil's dance, the feast of the whirlwinds. It is madness, beckoning chaos."

Sentiments like the above are evidences of the almost universal mental disease which is seated in society. Just as in spiritual matters men fancy that religion is gone from the human breast as soon as you take down its external ecclesiastical superstructure, so in temporal concerns men fancy that government is gone as soon as you tear away the political superstructure.

The sentiment of true religion is first set free when the ecclesiastical machine is lifted from it. So is the impulse for mutual self-government by consent first set free when the political machine is lifted from it. Strange, indeed, is it that, while the "Index," the "Truth Seeker," the "Investigator," and all the Free Religionists, agnostics, materialists, and other infidels, so-called, constantly proclaim this on the religious side, they refuse to recognize it on the political side, and thus cowardly belie their whole philosophy. All these religious liberals are Anarchists in theology, and zealously preach the Anarchistic gospel in that sphere; but, when asked to confront exactly the same situation in the political sphere, they are stiff-necked Presbyterians, hard-shelled Baptists, and straight-laced political Orthodox, of a very fanatical type. When I meet them, they politically invite me to rise for prayers, seek Jesus, and flee from the wrath to come.

Just as natural religion resides in the soul as an integral element of man, so does self-regulating equity reside in social being. These are not things to be instituted, set up, and supervised by fallible men. They cannot be framed and invented: *they are.* All we have to do is to liberate them. The machine imprisons them. They are nature's growths, and need the light and the sunshine. The machine shuts these out. You do not destroy them when you pull down the artificial structure that designing men have built around them: on the contrary, you bring them true life.

Church and State are the two great inter-operating machines that sit upon the neck of humanity. Ecclesiasticism is a patent milking machine for appropriating to the bloated paunches of priests and their allies the mother-milk of natural religion. That the source has not long ago dried up under the treatment of these suckers is only evidence of its firm seat in the natural constitution of man.

Politics is a patent bamboozling machine, whereby power-hungry knaves and industrial robbers get behind the social instincts which in nature secure good order and equity, and appropriate the spoils. That anything like order has survived only evidences how persistent are these instincts in nature. As between politics and these instincts, who can doubt which is the fittest, and which will ultimately survive.

The mission of the true Anarchist (disciple of Liberty) is to set free these social instincts, now imprisoned and choked up by artificial machines. Nature has provided the most complete organic guarantees of order, if only the children of men can be liberated from the pressure of contrivances designed to forestall and defeat natural law. Chaos is the ultimate penalty of the machine. Anarchy is the synonym of order, since, if anything, it is the deadly enemy of the machine. As the machine is abolished, Liberty, not the daughter, but the mother of order, will redeem her own. x.

P.S. Since penning the above, Herr Most's "Freiheit" has come to hand, with an able rejoinder touching the points alleged in my last article. Considering the vital nature of the issues involved, and by no means wishing to place Most and his party in a false light, I will attempt to reply in the next number. x.

A Champion of the Innocents.

With evident satisfaction and patriotic pride the hired editorial prostitute of the Providence "Journal" records that the Ordinance Board of the United States Army has recommended the construction of a monster balloon able to carry dynamite percussion bonds sufficient to destroy a city, a military camp, or a fleet of ships, with perfect impunity. When the London dynamiters incidentally scorched the petticoats of two or three loungers about the houses of parliament, the "Journal" thought it horrid that such inhuman fiends could be willing to sacrifice innocent lives, even to avenge the wrongs of their country. The "Journal," however, earnestly recommends that the Ordinance Board hurry forward the machinery by which Uncle Sam's dynamiters may be able to drop a bomb which shall destroy a whole city at once. It forgets all about "innocent lives" in this case. Shall one pray, pity, or swear over such sickening hypocrisy? x.

Auberon Herbert and His Work.

Auberon Herbert, whose essay, "A Politician in Sight of Haven," creates such an enthusiasm for Liberty in the minds of all thinking people who read it, has recently published still another book of similar purport and purpose. He calls it "The Right and Wrong of Compulsion by the State: A Statement of the Moral Principles of the Party of Individual Liberty, and the Political Measures Founded Upon Them." It consists of a series of papers written for Joseph Cowen's paper, the Newcastle "Chronicle," supplemented by a letter to the London "Times" on the English factory acts. Dedicated to Mr. Cowen's constituents, "The Workmen of Tyneside," it appeals with equal force to workmen the world over, and their welfare and their children's will depend upon the readiness with which they accept and the bravery with which they adhere to its all-important counsel. The book is a magnificent assault on the majority idea, a searching exposure of the inherent evil of State systems, and a glorious assertion of the inestimable benefits of voluntary action and free competition, reaching its climax in the emphatic declaration that "this question of power exercised by some men over other men is the greatest of all questions, the one that concerns the very foundations of society," upon the answer to which "must ultimately depend all ideas of right and wrong." This is a bold and, at first sight, an astonishing claim, but it is a true one nevertheless, and the fact that Mr. Herbert makes it so confidently shows that he is inspired by the same idea that gave birth to this journal, caused it to be christened Liberty, and determined it to labor first and foremost for Anarchy, or the Abolition of the State.

This is no fitful outburst on Mr. Herbert's part. He evidently has enlisted for a campaign which will end only with victory. The book in question seems to be the second in a series of "Anti-Force Papers," which promises to include special papers dealing more elaborately, but in the light of the same general principle, with the matters of compulsory taxation, compulsory education, land ownership, professional monopolies, prohibitory liquor laws, legislation against vice, State regulation of love relations, &c., &c. I know no more inspiring spectacle in England than that of this man of exceptionally high social position doing battle almost single-handed with the giant monster, government, and showing in it a mental rigor and vigor and a wealth of moral fervor rarely equalled in any cause. Its only parallel at the present day is to be found in the splendid attitude of Mr. Ruskin, whose earnest eloquence in behalf of economic equity rivals Mr. Herbert's in behalf of individual liberty.

This thought leads to the other, that each of these men lacks the truth that the other possesses. Mr. Ruskin sees very clearly the economic principle which makes all forms of usury unrighteous and wages for work the only true method of sustaining life, but he never perceives for a moment that individual human beings have sovereign rights over themselves. Mr. Herbert proves beyond question that the government of man by man is utterly without justification, but is quite ignorant of the fact that interest, rent, and profits will find no place in the perfect economic order. Mr. Ruskin's error is by far the more serious of the two, because the realization of Mr. Herbert's ideas would inevitably result in the equity that Mr. Ruskin sees, whereas this equity can never be achieved for any length of time without an at least partial fulfilment of individual liberty. Nevertheless it cannot be gainsaid that Mr. Herbert's failure to see the economic results of his ideas considerably impairs his power of carrying them home to men's hearts. Unfortunately, there are many people whom the most perfect deductive reasoning fails to convince. The beauty of a great principle and its harmonizing influence wherever it touches they are unable to appreciate. They can only see certain great and manifest wrongs, and they demand that these shall be righted. Unless they are clearly shown the connection between these wrongs and their real causes, they are almost sure to associate them with imaginary causes and to try the most futile and sometimes disastrous remedies. Now, the one great wrong that these people see today is the fact that industry and poverty commonly go hand in hand and are associated in the same persons, and the one thing that they are determined upon, regardless of everything else whatsoever, is that hereafter those who do the work of this world shall enjoy the wealth of this world. It is a righteous determination, and in it is to be found the true significance of the State-Socialistic movement which Mr. Herbert very properly condemns and yet only half understands. To meet it is the first necessity incumbent upon the friends of Liberty. It is sure that the workers can never permanently secure themselves in the control of their products except through the method of Liberty, but it is almost equally sure that, unless they are shown what Liberty will do for them in this respect, they will try every other method before they try Liberty. The necessity of showing them this Mr. Herbert, to be sure, dimly sees; but, the light not having dawned on himself, he cannot show it to others. He has to content himself, therefore, with such inadequate, unscientific, and partially charitable proposals as the formation of voluntary associations to furnish work to the unemployed. The working people will never thus be satisfied, and they ought not to be.

But Mr. Herbert can satisfy them if he can convince them of all that is implied in his advocacy of "complete free trade in all things." To many special phases of this free trade he does call marked attention, but never, I believe, to the most important of all, free trade in banking. If he would only dwell upon the evils of the money-issuing monopoly and emphasize with his great power the fact that competition, in this as in other matters, would give us all that is needed of the best possible article at the lowest possible price, thereby steadily reducing interest and rent to zero, putting capital within the comfortable reach of all deserving and enterprising people, and causing the greatest liberation on record of heretofore restricted energies, the laborers might then begin to see that here lies their only hope; that Liberty, after all, and not Government, is to be their saviour; that their first duty is to abolish the credit monopoly and let credit

organize itself; that then they will have to ask nobody for work, but everybody will be asking work of them; and that then, instead of having to take whatever pittance they can get, they will be in a position to exact wages equivalent to their product, under which condition of things the reign of justice will be upon us and labor will have its own. Then Mr. Herbert's work for Liberty will no longer be a struggle, but an unmixed pleasure. He will no longer have to breast the current by urging workmen to self-denial; he can successfully appeal to their self-interest, the tide will turn, and he will be borne onward with it to the ends that he desires. T.

Still another Anarchistic journal to be published in Paris, "Le Drapeau Rouge" (The Red Flag). The first number will appear May 24, the fourteenth anniversary of the Bloody Week when the infamous Versaillists massacred the people of Paris. The objects of the new journal are thus announced: "To try to free the laborer from all the barriers placed in his way in existing society; to make him see the benefits that social revolution will bring him, while proving to him that all governmental systems are bad and consequently must be suppressed; to make him understand also the necessity of destroying all authority, in whatever form it may present itself, and of substituting for it the practical idea of spontaneous organization."

Was Charles O'Conor an Anarchist?

[Rejected by The Century.]

The March "Century" contains some recollections of the late Charles O'Conor, very interesting to the friends and admirers of this remarkable man. Towards the close of the article, however, the writer, probably well conscious of the Anarchistic leanings of Mr. O'Conor, would seem to wish to convey the inference that his well-known distrust of "public judgments" was due to his failure of success as a public man.

Mr. O'Conor, of all men, could he speak, would second the command of the great Protector: "Paint me as I am!" Therefore I think it due to him, as well as to a truth-seeking public, that anything throwing light upon his real attitude towards political government should receive candid attention.

The first Anarchistic organ printed in the English language is America is Liberty, published by Benj. R. Tucker, the American translator of Proudhon and now one of the editors of the Boston "Globe." The first number of Liberty appeared in August, 1881, and its leading article, defining its principles, and demanding the abolition of the State, was of the most radical and uncompromising type. Copies of this first number were mailed to many of the most eminent thinkers and scholars throughout the land; but Mr. O'Conor was not among them, Mr. Tucker never dreaming of a radical on Nantucket. But among the first responses, as likewise the warmest and most appreciative, was one from Nantucket. The letter was anonymous, but expressed the most unqualified approval of the doctrines enunciated in the first number; the writer saying that he was as gratified as surprised to find that he had lived long enough to see an organ in print of doctrines which he had held for years, and which he had long been waiting to see published. The elegant diction and clean-cut logic of this letter greatly surprised Mr. Tucker, and while pondering in wonderment who could have written it, it was unfortunately mislaid and lost. The letter ended by saying that it was not necessary that Mr. Tucker should know the writer's name; but for the enclosed dollar he should send two copies regularly to "Post Office Box No. 22, Nantucket, Mass." It was only upon the announcement of the death of the great lawyer that the idea flashed into Mr. Tucker's brain that possibly the author of that striking anonymous letter might have been Charles O'Conor. A relative of his being on a visit to Nantucket, he requested him to inquire whose box No. 22 was. The postmaster at first hesitated to tell, but finally said that, inasmuch as the owner had recently died, he would inform him that Box 22 had been Mr. Charles O'Conor's ever since his residence in Nantucket.

Last Summer a prominent radical New England thinker was visiting in Nantucket, and was admitted into Mr. Chas. O'Conor's library, where Miss Folger, his secretary, being pleased with the visitor, took especial pains to conduct him around and answer any questions he might ask as to Mr. O'Conor's tastes and preferences among books. They finally came upon a shelf containing Proudhon's "What is Property?" translated by Mr. Tucker; beside which were some other of Proudhon's works in French and a bound volume of Mr. Tucker's magazine, the "Radical Review."

"And did Mr. O'Conor read Proudhon?" inquired the gentleman.

"Yes," replied Miss Folger promptly; "he cherished these books especially. Many an hour has he paced this aisle as if in deep delight, while I read from them to him, occasionally interrupting with comments of his own."

These facts, which I vouch for as authentic, taken in connection with Mr. O'Conor's address to the people of Nantucket, published in the New York "Herald" as his last writing of a public nature, together with many other things I could cite, and which are generally known to the public, incline me to believe that his distrust of "public judgments" was due to a deliberate and judicial analysis of the just scope of political government, and that he was carried squarely and disinterestedly into the Anarchistic drift. It strikes me that there is no little moral responsibility involved in ascribing unworthy motives to the position of one who was more zealous of his mental integrity than of all else. The writer, who, in common with not a few others who simply desire to get at the truth, believes that Mr. O'Conor was at bottom a thoroughgoing Anarchist, hopes that his opinion deserves an airing equally with that which ascribes his distrust of "public judgments" to more personal chagrin.

HENRY APPLETON.

PROVIDENCE, R. I.

Let Us Reason Together.

To the Editor of Liberty:

Being an outsider, and having been endowed, perhaps, with an excess of modesty, I feel some hesitation in knocking at the door of your sanctum, especially when on an errand that will probably not be construed as strictly friendly to the cause to which Liberty is devoted. Doubtless Liberty has small space to spare for the effusions of any but Anarchists, and indeed this must be expected under present circumstances. But if you will indulge me, I will say a few words which have been prompted by Edgeworth's article, "Contributions from the Enemy," which appeared in Liberty of January 31. It is very evident that Edgeworth has studied church history and church methods to some purpose. He has no scruples in adopting the motto: *Fas est ab hoste doceri.* Without church fairs, donations, and various grab-bag, kiss-me-quick contrivances to draw funds from the mixed multitude, there would have been no hope of sending missionaries even so far as Chicago to save heathens.

Edgeworth makes a very skilful argument based on the present status of affairs relating to public taxes and the public school system, and draws attention to the fact that the Catholic church in this country is an elephant that would willingly, although trained to step carefully over its master, put its foot down on the master's stomach, if the signs were right.

It is plain that the struggle between the Catholic church and the Liberals is intensifying, and the lines are daily being more and more sharply drawn, but the contest becomes triangular from the fact that the government is Protestant, and that, at present, holds the lash over all of us. No one of the three can gain a point without indirectly aiding one of the others, and *vice versa*. I admit that, if the Catholics should carry their point, a revolution of some kind could not be postponed very long, but it is not very clear that Liberals would necessarily be predisposed to Anarchism. But if the church should turn against the government, the Anarchists are quite welcome to all the added satisfaction they would enjoy from their *pro tem.* fraternization with the old harlot. Certainly the unholy alliance could be but little benefit to either party while the "monster fungus" remains. But suppose the work of subversion accomplished, what then? Would the Catholics be any less Catholics? What would the handful of Anarchists do with the "monster" church? The good Catholic, even an educated one, has no more conception of Anarchy according to Edgeworth's ideal than a pig has of Newton's laws of motion. He is the child of Authority and can comprehend nothing else.

How could Anarchism possibly gain anything by the substitution of one government for another, as would certainly be the case on the subversion of ours, or else anarchy of a kind that Edgeworth is no more anxious to see than the strongest supporter of Authority? I have no apologies to offer for the sins of politicians, but I cannot forbear saying that, if Edgeworth lives to see this government subverted by any coalition of which the Catholic church forms a part, he will quickly discover that it is possible for a more horrible thing to exist than "that monster fungus, the United States government."

I believe in the fullest individual liberty consistent with safety, morality, and the elevation of society, but I cannot see that Anarchism would be a boon until a considerable majority of mankind are mentally free, and that is far from being the case at present. N. G. W.

An Iowa Woman With Her Eyes Open.

The following letter, written by Cornelia Boecklin, of Burlington, Iowa, is reprinted from the "American Nonconformist:"

The human family have had too much government and too much religion. I feel as thoroughly disgusted with the State as you are with Christianity. I never was a Christian; I despise Christianity. But I think that there is a stronger power for us to fight just now. I consider the Church power to-day considerably weakened, and without State backing it could not cut so much of a figure. What power was it that imprisoned D. M. Bennett? Who paid that Comstock $4,000 a year to interfere with other people's business? What power imprisoned those three Englishmen on the London "Freethinker?" What power was it that took Annie Besant's little girl away from her? Who committed those outrages upon the Mussel Slough settlers? Not the Church surely. To-day we can defy the Church, but can you defy the State? Hardly. I know very well that I would like to, but our crowd is too small as yet.

I do not approve of the public school system, and here in this town for nineteen years my mother and her children have paid thousands of dollars for school taxes alone, and Werner, the only child we had to send to school,—why, I was obliged to take him out of the public school, and send him to a private school, and did *we* ever have any say whatever about *how* these schools should be run? Could I get a friend a position in one of these public schools (no matter how competent that friend for a teacher)? No! but I could hand over the money every year in the shape of taxes. I could fill pages talking against the public school fraud, but for your sake I forbear. Then again I have had my eyes opened pretty effectually in reference to taxing homes. I have seen enough of that swindle. Thousands of vacant lots of land here, there, and everywhere, doing nobody any good. Presumptuous men and women think they would like to have a home, up go the taxes. If you keep your home trim, and in good shape around and about, then of course your taxes must be higher than if you allowed your home and surroundings to go uncared for. The idea of punishing people for building a home, and trying to have it look pretty! Fine system, isn't it? Then again, how the State has robbed delinquent tax payers! In the highly civilized state of Iowa, the delinquent tax payer has had to pay twenty per cent. interest, until within the last year or two. Of course this was a nice little arrangement for a certain class of sharks who make their living by the sweat of their—what?—brows? not much! One could go on indefinitely telling about the impositions of the State. We want Justice, not charity; we have had too much charity. We see men robbing their fellow-men year in and year out, and, when Christmas comes around, these same fellows scatter a dozen or so of turkeys about "among their poor." Cheap arrangement this! May we all have the courage to stand up for the right in the coming struggle is the wish of your friend,

CORNELIA BOECKLIN.

Liberty Converts a Communist.

Dear Mr. Tucker:

Enclosed find fifty cents,—twenty-five to extend my own subscription and twenty-five for another subscriber for Liberty. Address: Max Frank, 67 Congress Avenue, New Haven, Conn.

I do my best to spread your paper among those of my acquaintance who are more or less penetrated with socialistic ideas, but it is a very hard job to convince a German socialist of the Anarchistic faith of a paper which does not thunder with dynamite, bombs, and revolvers at least in every three lines. It is still harder to convince these "new Anarchists" that Anarchism has nothing to do with communism. I was myself an Anarchist of that kind before I read Liberty, but now I am taught by this paper that man cannot be made happy by any system enforced by others, but only by one which is the product of his own will. Absolute liberty only can direct the efforts of man to goodness and fairness, because only in such a case can he distinguish and choose the best; but this cannot be said of liberty limited by some economic or political system. Fraternally yours,

M. FRANKLIN.

NEW HAVEN, CONN., February 15, 1885.

GOD AND THE STATE.

BY

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Translated from the French by

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E. C. WALKER, } *Editors and Publishers.*

Box 42. VALLEY FALLS, KANSAS.

WHAT'S TO BE DONE?

Continued from page 3.

"Do with this money as you will; throw it in the water if you like; but you cannot send it back to me, for you will not find me." The money is said to be still at the banker's. If this report be true, it was Rakhmétoff and none other that called on the philosopher. Such, then, is the gentleman whom we now see seated in Kirsanoff's study. He is truly an uncommon man, an individual of a very rare sort. And I have not spoken to you of him at this length, reader with the penetrating eye, to teach you the proper method of behavior (unknown to you) toward people of his sort. You cannot see a single man of his type; your eyes are not made to see such phenomena; to you these men are invisible; none but honest and fearless eyes can see them. But it was good that you should know, were it only by hearsay, that such men exist; as for feminine readers and simple-minded masculine readers, they know the value of this description.

Yes, people like Rakhmétoff are very droll, very amusing. I tell them that they are very droll; I tell them so because I pity them; I say to the noble hearts who are charmed by them: "Do not imitate them. The way in which they lead you is poor in personal joys." But, instead of listening to me, they say: "The way is not poor at all; on the contrary, it is very rich; though it should be poor in some particular spot, it can never long continue so, and we shall have strength enough to scale the difficult points in order to enter into the immense prairies fertile in all sorts of joys." You see, then, reader with the penetrating eye, that it is not for you, but for another portion of the public, that I have said that men like Rakhmétoff are droll. I will tell you, however, that they are not wicked; otherwise, perhaps you would not understand; no, they are not wicked. They are few in number, but through them the life of all mankind expands; without them it would have been stifled. They are few in number, but they put others in a position to breathe, who without them would have been suffocated. Great is the mass of good and honest men, but Rakhmétoffs are rare; they are like the theine in the tea, the bouquet in fine wine,—strength and aroma. They are the best among the best, they are the movers of the movers, they are the salt of the salt of the earth.

XXX.

"Ah, then!" thinks the reader with the penetrating eye, "so Rakhmétoff is to be the principal personage and master of all, Véra Pavlovna is to fall in love with him, and we are to see the story of Lopoukhoff begun over again with Kirsanoff as the hero."

Nothing of the sort, reader with the penetrating eye. Rakhmétoff will pass the evening in conversation with Véra Pavlovna, and I will not keep from you a single word of what they say. You shall soon see that, if I had not chosen to communicate this conversation to you, I could very easily have kept from doing so, and the course of events in my story would not have been changed in the least. I also tell you in advance that, when Rakhmétoff, after talking with Véra Pavlovna, shall go away, he will go away for ever from my story, that he will be neither a principal nor a secondary character, and that he will not figure further in my romance. Why have I introduced him into the romance and described him in such detail? There is an enigma for you, reader with the penetrating eye. Can you guess it? It will be solved for you in the following pages. But guess now what will be said farther on. It should not be difficult, if you had the slightest idea of art, about which you are so fond of chattering; but it is Greek to you. Stop, I will whisper in your ear half of the solution of the enigma. I have shown Rakhmétoff in order to satisfy the most essential condition of art, and simply for that. Well, now, find out if you can what this artistic condition is. Look, guess! The feminine reader and the simple-minded masculine reader, who do not chatter about art, know, but to you it is an enigma. Take your time. I draw a long, broad stroke between the lines: (see how careful I am with you). Pause over this stroke, and reflect upon it; still, perhaps you will not guess.

Madame Mertzaloff came. After having regretted and consoled, she said that she would take charge of the shop with pleasure, but that she feared she might not succeed, and again she began to regret and console while helping to sort out the effects. After having asked the neighbors' servants to go to the bake-shop, Rakhmétoff prepared the *samovar*, brought it in, and they began to take tea; Rakhmétoff spent half an hour with the ladies, drank five cups of tea, half emptied at the same time an enormous pot of cream, and ate a frightful quantity of rolls, and two plain loaves which served as a foundation.

"I am entitled to this extra indulgence, for I am sacrificing an entire half of my day."

While enjoying his meal and listening to the ladies as they exhausted themselves in grief, he expressed three times his opinion: "It is senseless,"—not that the ladies should exhaust themselves in grief, but that any one should kill himself for any reason whatever except to get rid of an intolerably painful and incurable disease or to avoid a painful and inevitable death,—such, for instance, as torture on the wheel; each time he expressed this opinion concisely, as was his habit. He poured out the sixth cup of tea, at the same time emptying the pot of cream completely, and took all the rolls that were left, and, the ladies having long ago finished their meal, he made a bow and went off with these things to finish his physical delectation in the study, where he passed some time as a sybarite, extended on the divan, which was used by everybody, but which to him was Capuan luxury.

"I am entitled to this feast, for I am sacrificing twelve or fourteen hours of my time," said he. After having finished his physical delectation, he began once more his mental delectation,—the reading of the commentaries on the Apocalypse. About ten o'clock the police official came to communicate the particulars of the affair to the wife of the suicide; Rakhmétoff told him that the wife knew all about it already, and that there was nothing to be said to her; the official was very glad to be relieved from participation in a harrowing scene. Then came Macha and Rachel and began to sort out the clothing and goods; Rachel advised the sale of everything except the nice cloak, for, if that were sold, it would be necessary in three months to have a new one made. To this Véra Pavlovna consented, and the price was fixed at four hundred and fifty roubles,—all that the things were worth, according to Madame Mertzaloff. So at ten o'clock the commercial transaction was concluded. Rachel paid two hundred roubles; she had no more about her, but would send the balance in two or three days by Madame Mertzaloff; she took the things and went away. Madame Mertzaloff remained an hour longer, but it was time to nurse her child, and she went away, saying that she would come the next day to accompany Véra Pavlovna to the station.

When Madame Mertzaloff had gone, Rakhmétoff closed Newton's commentaries on the Apocalypse, put them carefully back in their place, and sent Macha to ask Véra Pavlovna if he could go into her room. He obtained permission. He entered, as usual, slowly and coolly.

"Véra Pavlovna, I am now able to console you to a certain extent. It is permissible to do so now; it was not necessary to do so sooner. First warning you that the general result of my visit will be of a consoling nature,—you know, I never say vain words, and you must calm yourself in advance,—I am going to explain the affair to you at length. I told you that I had seen Alexander Matvéitch and that I knew all. That was strictly true. But I did not tell you that I knew all from him, and I could not have told you so, since in reality I knew all, not from him, but from Dmitry Serguéitch, who came to see me about two o'clock; I was notified in advance of his coming, and consequently was at home; so he came to see me about two o'clock, after writing the note which has caused you so much grief. And he it was who asked me" . . . .

To be continued.

THEN AND NOW.

XVI.

A LITTLE TALK ABOUT MONEY.

BOSTON, May 16, 2085.

My Dear Louise:

Mr. De Demain today explained to me some things about the money of today which I think will be of interest to you. Knowing how much we of 1885 depended upon our government for a stable currency, I have often wondered how a people without a government could have any safe medium for exchange. Mr. De Demain's answer to my question about the matter was, first, his peculiar smile, and then the following:

"Our money is simply labor certificates. Labor is the basis of our currency,—not gold, not silver. We consider the result of man's handiwork more stable than the credit of a government. Our money is based upon nothing potential, but upon something actual, something substantial. Nothing can cause such a currency to fluctuate. It never depreciates, it never bears a lie on its face. If it be marked "one dollar," it is worth one dollar in exchange without the command of any law."

"Who makes and issues the money?" I asked.

"Private individuals or companies. Money is issued just the same as cotton cloth is, and with no more restrictions. You know that a certain firm which manufactures cotton cloth is reliable, that its goods are always what they are represented to be. You do not ask your government to guarantee that cotton cloth shall be as represented or up to a certain standard, and you do not expect your government to monopolize the manufacture of such goods or to grant to others such a monopoly. You prefer to rely on the honesty, or, if not the honesty, the self-interest, of the manufacturers. That is the way we feel about money. Private individuals organize a company and issue money based upon the possessions of the members of the company. These possessions, of course, are based upon labor expended in producing them. They loan this money to such as need it who can give good security, charging for such use enough only to cover the cost of transacting the business. No interest is charged."

"You say the money issued by a banking firm is based upon property owned by the firm. Suppose a case where $50,000 was the total amount of property owned by a bank represented by A. B is worth property valued at $1,000. He goes to A and desires to exchange moneys for convenience' sake. A has already disposed of notes to the value of $50,000, the extent of his firm's wealth. Must he refuse B?"

"Not at all," said Mr. De Demain. "When he takes B's money, he adds just so much to the wealth of his firm, and can issue notes for this additional wealth. If B presents $1,000 worth of his money, A fills out blank notes of his firm to that amount and hands them over to B. Under this system, which, you can see, is perfectly honest and sound, a banker is not required to have much capital. His stock in trade is his widely and favorably known name. He simply loans the indorsement of that name."

"Why, if the borrower has good security, does he not issue his own money?"

"Because it is generally more convenient to have the money issued by a well-known firm. For use simply among those who know him well his own money, or notes, would be perfectly good. If he is transacting business with strangers, he must have money that they know to be good. So he exchanges his money for that of some well-known man or company. The cost is trifling. A man who owns property worth two thousand dollars issues money to that amount. This is a very simple matter. No one is forced by any law to receive such money. If the man who issues it is known to be honest, it will be received, of course. You would take a check from an honest man in your Boston of 1885 as soon as you would a bank note or coin. In order to protect the interests of the national bank, you made laws that such checks should not pass as currency. Honesty is the only protection that our currency needs."

"Suppose you were well-known here in Boston, but were unknown in San Francisco, and you should have occasion to pay a bill in that city,—what money could you use?"

"I should simply exchange my personal notes for those of some individual or firm well-known on the Pacific coast and send such notes in payment," said Mr. De Demain.

"Such a system as you have was tried before the times of national banks in the United States, but was a failure, as I suppose you have learned from history. Why was it?" I asked.

"The system in vogue before that of national banks was not in any manner like ours. The currency issued by those institutions (which, by the way, were under State control) was based upon fictitious values. There was nothing stable at the bottom. Most of such currency was based on the credit of the State. Is there any wonder that money of this kind was of uncertain value?

"I have read that many men of your time argued that a national debt was a national blessing, because without it there could be no national bank currency. There is some difference between money based upon a debt and money based upon the actual labor value of property. We think ours is the better system. We have no fault to find with it, at any rate."

"To make such a system the success that you say it is the people of today must be much more honest than the people of two hundred years ago," I suggested.

"Not of necessity," said Mr. De Demain. "I think the people of today are more honest, but their prosperity is what supports our currency, and that prosperity is in turn supported by the currency system. General prosperity also, I think, tends to make honesty more general. All things work together for the good of those who live under Anarchy."

At this point our conversation drifted off to other subjects, one of which I shall write you about in my next letter. It will, I think, show you one of the most peculiar things about this most peculiar thing,—Socialistic Anarchy.

JOSEPHINE.

Proprietors and Their Slaves.

I have seen in a long time nothing keener, wittier, more cutting than the following mercilessly sarcastic analysis of the existing social state read as an essay by G. Bernard Shaw of London before the Liberal and Social Union of that city on February 26. Much space is surrendered to it here, but none too much in view of its importance.

I am here this evening in an invidious position. The Liberal and Social Union, a body of ladies and gentlemen of more than ordinary culture, have done me the honor of inviting me to address them on the subject of Socialism from the point of view of a Socialist. From that point of view, unhappily, I must regard the Liberal and Social Union, in spite of its hospitality, and the human race generally, as cannibals of the most dangerous description, whose power must be completely neutralized before they will cease to retard the evolution of the social instincts of the race by perpetually preying upon one another. The very deep and sincere admiration which we all entertain in this century for ourselves cannot but make this Socialistic conclusion unpalatable; but it is so well supported by history that I should be trifling with the audience were I to pretend that their generosity of disposition, cultivated intellects, exalted ideals, and genuine indignation at the rapacity of their fellows, has ever prevented them from purchasing the necessaries of life at prices which obviously entail abject poverty on the producers of these necessaries, or from drawing dividends year after year from mines and railways which they have never even seen, much less worked upon. I have myself disgracefully consumed in idleness so much of the wealth produced by peasants from the soil they tilled, that they have been left for far poorer than I, who did nothing for them. Yet I have never been reproached for this. On the contrary, I should have been far more highly esteemed and courted had I been able to plunder three or four thousand peasants instead of one or two. However, I made the most of my limited opportunities, and have little doubt that those whom I address now have done the same. We thus meet on equal terms, and can proceed to discuss our subject quietly and cautiously, as becomes people who all dwell in the same glass house.

Mankind, in order to live, must have access to the earth and the fullness thereof. Hence, if the earth be owned by a private person, he can cause his fellow-creatures to die by refusing them access to the land. This power makes them his slaves. He has only to say "I will grant you access to the land on condition that you do for me whatever I choose to dictate," and they must, on pain of death, accept that hard condition. It is known to us all that the land of England today, excepting the barren highroads, and a few patches of common which have accidentally not been stolen, is owned by private persons. The rest of the community are therefore the slaves of these private persons, or of the capitalists to whom they have sublet their powers in order that they may ultimately resume them in a more effective stage of development. We are then divided into two great sections: proprietors and slaves. Now slaves are always separated into classes according to the nature of their services. Your shepherd need be little better off than your sheep. Allow him a hut, a coarse garment, and the wherewithal to keep alive himself, his wife, and a rising generation of shepherds and shepherds' wives and all your purposes will be served as effectually as if you treated him like a prince. Therefore you do not treat him like a prince, and you do treat him like a shepherd. But you need a physician as well as a shepherd, and him you cannot have on these easy terms: your life and that of your wife and children depend on his skill, in order to acquire which he must practice for years on your other slaves in an hospital, and have at his disposal museums, libraries, dissecting rooms, paupers alive and dead, and oral instruction from experts in his profession. And this is not enough. As he is to be your intimate associate, the repository of some of your most private affairs, and the confidential adviser of your wife, he must be no rebellious, rough, and uncultured slave, but a pampered, softly nurtured retainer, with lowlier serfs allotted to do menial work for him, and a degree of comfort and consideration which you yourself may perhaps be unable always to attain. You cannot have him more cheaply; and so, though you complain of the expense, you pay the price. But you get him as cheaply as possible, caring nothing for his needs, but only for your own. This is proved by your treatment of your shepherd's doctor. To him you deny the social consideration you allow to your own medical adviser, because, as you do not associate with him, his lack of social polish does not inconvenience you. All you need from him is that he will keep your shepherds in working order, and for this professional ability alone suffices. Hence your shepherd's doctor is a much less expensive slave than the general practitioner who attends *you*. But you naturally select the best doctor for yourself, and leave the worst to your shepherds. This enables you to claim that under your admirable system doctors are rewarded in proportion to their merits. By this you mean that the best doctors waste their superior skill in preserving the lives of idlers whose existence is an evil, whilst the worst doctors are busy killing useful and industrious men. Thus the reward of the best man is the privilege of ministering to the worst.

Between the shepherd and the physician come many grades of slaves. There is the workman, the foreman, the clerk, the manager, and the secretary. Each of these grades has its lawyer, its doctor, and its divine. Then there is the soldier, sometimes a cheap article who has but to obey orders, charge with the bayonet at men with whom he has no quarrel, shoot and be shot at, and give three cheers when titled persons inspect his buttons; sometimes a comparatively expensive gentleman, versed in trigonometry and tactics, and yet not above levying executions on slaves in default with their tribute. With all these varieties of servitude, the slave section gets minutely stratified into classes. Ignorant of the causes that have produced the stratification, each stratum despises or envies the others. The doctor despises the shepherd because he is ignorant and uncleanly: the shepherd mistrusts the doctor because he is the friend of his tyrant. The difference in comfort between the extreme strata is immense. The unskilled laborer is allowed 2s. 6d. thirty pence, a day. The eminent barrister is allowed fifty guineas, or 12,600 pence a day. The barrister does not get fifty guineas every day; but neither does the unskilled laborer get half a crown every day. When both are in work—when the proprietors need their services—the barrister gets 420 times as much as the unskilled laborer, in spite of the fact that the proprietors have denied to the laborer the education and comforts they have allowed to the barrister in his nonage. It is sometimes alleged that differences such as these are due to differences in the sobriety or ability of the individuals. If sobriety be indeed the cause, then, if the barrister drink one bottle of wine a day, as many eminent barristers do, the unskilled laborer must drink 420 bottles of wine a day before the barrister can be considered 420 times as sober. Nor is it probable that any man has 420 times, or even four times, the ability of another. When the external conditions are equalized, the man who can double the average achievement is looked upon with wonder. The argument that thrift is at the bottom of it all is far sounder. We estimate a man's thrift by the amount of money he possesses. The barrister has 420 times as much money as the unskilled laborer. Hence we argue that the barrister is 420 times as thrifty as the laborer. If we accept this short method of computing thrift, the conclusion is logical, if not eminently satisfactory to the laborer; but this sort of thrift is evidently not a virtue which the laborer can cultivate or not as he pleases. Neither sobriety, nor thrift, nor any ordinary quality can induce the proprietors to raise the laborer to the class of their most favored slaves. Should he gain promotion by absolute genius, he will still be at a disadvantage at many points with the most commonplace members of the class to which he is elevated. In either class he will still be a slave, receiving out of the full exchange value of his services just what is sufficient to maintain him and enable to reproduce himself with such culture and habits as may be necessary to make him an efficient servant and, if his services bring him into personal contact with his employers, an agreeable associate. All the rest he must surrender as rent or interest to his masters.

I fear that I must, for lack of time, venture to assume that my hearers already know how this system is made automatic by the action of competition. I am aware that such an assumption exposes me to the risk of being misunderstood; for it would be affectation on my part to pretend that any company of English ladies and gentlemen can be depended upon for even a rudimentary knowledge of economics and sociology. Bad as we are, I believe that if we all understood how we are living, and what we are doing daily, we should make a revolution before the end of the week. But as we do not know; and as many of us, foreseeing unpleasant revelations, do not want to know; I can only assure you that I am in perfect concord with standard economists when I state that competition is the force that makes our industrial system self-acting. It produces the effects which I have described without the conscious contrivance or interference of either master on the one hand, or slave on the other. It may be described as a see-saw, or lever of the first order, having the fulcrum between the power and the weight. The power is the labor force of the slaves; the weight is the body of proprietors who have to be raised above the level of the slaves and maintained there. Hence the more numerous the slaves are, the lower they sink, and the higher they raise the proprietors. Conversely, if the slaves decrease in number they rise a little and the proprietors sink. Hence the Malthusians urge the workers to reduce their numbers as much as possible. Unfortunately, when the masters find their end descending too low, they allow the weaker members of their own body to slip down to the other end of the lever, into the slave class, until the former preponderance is reëstablished.

Socialists insist that people should stand on the firm earth, and not on a see-saw, much less on a lever which is always at see, and never at saw. They seek to disable the lever. Now, the way to disable a lever is to remove the fulcrum. What is the fulcrum of this lever of competition? Clearly it is private property in the raw material and machinery indispensable to subsistence.* The slave submits to the master solely because the master has the power to withhold from him the means of subsistence if he rebels. The master of the land says, after St. Paul, "If a man will not work for me, neither shall he live." Deprive him of this power of condemning his fellow-man to death, and the fellow-man will snap his fingers at him, and quote St. Paul more accurately in his turn. To deprive the proprietor of this power, you must deprive him of his private property in the land and capital of the nation, which is just what the socialist proposes. This is why the masters raise so loud an alarm when an attack on private property is proposed. Unfortunately for themselves, they have set the example of disregarding it. The so-called right of private property is a convention that every man should enjoy the product of his own labor, either to consume it or exchange it for the equivalent product of his fellow-laborer. But the landlord and capitalist enjoy the product of the labor of others, which they consume to the value of many millions sterling every year without even a pretence of producing an equivalent. They daily violate the right to which they appeal when the socialist attacks them. Nor is their inconsistency so obvious as might be expected. If you violate a workman's right daily for centuries, and daily respect the landlord's right, the workman's right will at last be forgotten, whilst the landlord's right will appear more sacred as successive years add to its antiquity. In this way the most illogical distinctions come to be accepted as natural and inevitable. One man enters a farm-house secretly, helps himself to a share of the farm produce, and leaves without giving the farmer an equivalent. We call him a burglar, and send him to penal servitude. Another man does precisely the same thing openly, has the impudence even to send a note to say when he is coming, and repeats his foray twice a year, breaking forcibly into the premises if his demand is not complied with. We call him a landlord, respect him, and, if his freebooting extends over a large district, make him deputy-lieutenant of the country or send him to Parliament, to make laws to license his predatory habits. We need not even contrast two different men. Let us take the case of a railway shareholder, who lives idly on his dividends, having purchased the power of making the railway officials work for him. This man robs every unfortunate railway porter daily of a share of the value of his work, without incurring the least punishment, or even disapprobation. Yet if he were to do the same thing in another way; if he were to attack a railway porter in a lonely street and rifle his pockets; he would render himself liable to imprisonment and disgrace. And it is not at all improbable that, at his trial, the fact of his being a holder of railway shares would be brought forward as affording a strong presumption of his honesty and respectability. Of the mental confusion caused by the toleration of these anomalies, and the failure to recognize them as such, we shall very possibly have some examples before we separate this evening; but we need not depend on our own efforts for assurances that if the upper classes consume luxuries they pay for them; that a tradesman will not give a landlord a coat or a leg of mutton for nothing, any more than he will give it to a laborer; that landlords should be satisfied with fair rents (as if privately appropriated rent could be fair under any circumstances), or that capitalists should content themselves with reasonable interest (as if interest could possibly be a reasonable charge); that men will not do their best unless they have the incentive of knowing that the more they produce, the more they will be robbed of; that railways are constructed by buying pieces of paper in the Stock Exchange, and could not be constructed in any other way; that the money spent in drink annually would suffice to raise the East-End dock laborers to affluence; that Robinson Crusoe was a capitalist farmer and shipowner; that people should not indulge in wild talk about revolutions; that if we divided up all the money in the country we should only have £30 apiece (which, by-the-by, is rather a dangerous fact to obtrude on a man who has less than £30); and above all, that if we did away with landlordism and capitalism today, we should have all our social inequalities and evils back again in six months:—that is to say, that if we remove the cause, the effects will still continue. This hotch-potch of error and nonsensically advanced truth can be, and has repeatedly been disentangled and refuted, but to no purpose as regards the men who utter it; for a man who does not understand his own proposition cannot understand a refutation of it. And the landlords and capitalists have no longer any skilled apologists. Political economy in the days of McCulloch and John Stuart Mill said what it could for them; but Mill finally dropped them; and his successor, Cairnes, let out the truth at last that rich idlers are an unmitigated nuisance in a community. The more enlightened idlers are themselves growing ashamed. They do something (which usually has to be undone by somebody else) and plead that they are working. Gentlemen laboriously get called to the bar, and, as briefless barristers, feel that they can read Cairnes with equanimity. Ladies educate themselves, learn to paint or play the violoncello, and feel that their lives, at least, have not been wasted. Both ladies and gentlemen will give alms, get up concerts and bazaars, join societies for mutual improvement and admiration. They are not asked to do any of these things, yet they do them. They

*In other words, monopoly is the fulcrum of this lever of competition,—that is, our competition is not competitive enough, but is limited in certain directions by the denial of competition and of the means of competition. Therefore it is not correct to say that competition divides mankind into proprietors and slaves; that division results from monopoly or the absence of competition.—*Editor Liberty.*

are asked to work as hard for the workers as the workers work for them; and that they will not do. Many of them have got to the point of being willing to sacrifice almost anything for the poor, except the power and practice of robbing them. Nevertheless that is what they must sacrifice now, if they would avert another failure of human society. Such failures, though not absolutely irretrievable, are very tedious. The human race has hitherto never succeeded in establishing a permanent social state. They tried on a large scale in Egypt; but the experiment, after progressing hopefully for centuries, collapsed. They tried again in Greece with some valuable results, but with the same end. Then Rome tried her hand, and made a tremendous mess of it. Now we are trying, and, so far, are doing worse even than the Romans. Every reformer has his pet reason for the decay of these civilizations; and I will not assert that luxury and slavery rotted away the foundations of them all. But I may at least claim that luxury and slavery did not prove so beneficial that we need apprehend much danger from ridding ourselves of them.

The main difficulty of the Socialist is not, however, in convincing people that the present condition of society is a bad one. Intelligent members of the proprietary classes admit that when the life of the masses is described to them. The lower classes know it by experience without being told. It is even possible to obtain general assent to the proposition that the millennium is incompatible with private property. But the mass of the people—particularly those who are not in absolutely wretched circumstances—are loth to move, and afraid of the unknown that lies at the other side of change. They admit that they are ill; but when the Socialist prescribes exercise—violent exercise sometimes—they peevishly demand a remedy of the patent medicine description. "Give us something definite," they say: "what is it that you are driving at?" "Abolish private property in land, and prevent the employment of the means of production as capital," replies the Socialist. "That is definite enough; is it not?" "But how are you going to do it?" persists the other. At this the Socialist loses his temper. "*I* am not going to do it," he retorts. "*We* are going to do it; and the ways and means must be settled by us in council when we have made up our minds on what we have to do. If you choose to sit down and let other men decide on a plan, you will probably find, when it is put into practice, that your interests have been overlooked—and serve you right too. If you have no ideas on the subject, that only proves that you have never read the works of the men whose schemes you were sneering down as Utopian the day before yesterday." The Socialist then recommends Engels and other German authors to his assailant, who probably does not know German. So he falls back on the sacredness of private property, and declares that, after all, a man has a right to do what he likes with his own.

This alleged right of a man to do what he likes with his own is the private property principle which the Socialist attacks. It is already obsolete except in the case of land and the means of production. Property in other things is subject to the condition that it shall not be used to injure or oppress. A landlord, for example, if he wishes to turn his arable land into pasture, or his pasture into a deer forest, is permitted to drive hardworking husbandmen or shepherds off his property into overcrowded towns, or, for the matter of that, into the sea, with impunity, because he claims a right to do what he likes with his own. But the landlord owns other things besides land. He owns guns and sticks. If he were to take the stick and give one of the husbandmen or shepherds a thrashing with it, the plea that the stick was his own and that he had a right to use it as he pleased would not save him from punishment. Still less do we allow him to present his gun at a tenant, and, by threatening him with death, compel him to give up what he has gained from the soil by his labor. Yet what he may not do with a gun, he may do, and does, with a writ of ejectment. Such a power is subversive of property in the only sense in which property is a sane institution. But the landlord, by studiously confusing private property outside and independent of the law and the commonweal, with the public right of every man to possess and enjoy what he produces, succeeds in persuading careless reasoners that to attack private property is to attack the commonweal. He says in effect: "If you abolish my right to wear another man's coat, what becomes of my right to wear my own? The right to wear coats is sacred; and if you violate it, society will be impossible." One can understand a landlord using this argument; but it is not so easy to understand the many silly people who are not landlords, but tenants, and who yet repeat it in defence of their despoilers' power to plunder them. The inability to comprehend economic problems indicated by such suicidal utterances on the part of the slave class is a serious matter. The utterances are very common; and hence it may be inferred that the inability is very general. For this reason the abolition of private property, the equitable distribution of labor and of the products of labor among the community, and the nationalization of rent,* will have to be accomplished by an enlightened minority. They will have to overcome the active resistance of the proprietors, and the inertia of the masses. If this be once done, the masses will acquiesce; and the proprietors will no longer exist as a class. But the proprietors may fight: Lord Bramwell explicitly declares that they will fight. They scare many persons from Socialism by threatening to compel Socialists to shed their blood. Unfortunately they are accustoming the public to bloodshed. Revolting as it is at first, there is nothing to which men so rapidly grow habituated: they even develop a taste for it. When we have had a little more practice in fighting for our bondholders abroad, we will think little of fighting against them at home should occasion arise. Civil war is horrible; but we have supped full of horrors in our city slums: and an open, well-ventilated battle-field, with wounded men instead of rickety children and starving women, would be an absolute improvement. The proportion of corpses would be about the same, and the suffering would be less prolonged; whilst excitement and hope would take the place of dullness and despair. These humane considerations constantly tempt the poor to violence, and weaken the influence of those who would restrain them until the steps to follow the battle have been thoroughly debated. It is still harder to stay those who would hasten a revolution by intimidation. We know the cause of dynamite explosions, but not their effects. We know, for example, that if we raise the temperature of water to 212 degrees Fahrenheit, it will boil; and we know just as certainly that if we destroy the liberty of the press and the right of public meeting, dynamite will explode. Russia and Austria first discovered this fact; and we, in a truly scientific spirit, have verified it experimentally in Ireland. Now if Socialism be not made respectable and formidable by the support of *our* class—if it be left entirely to the poor, then the proprietors will attempt to suppress it by such measures as they have already taken in Austria and Ireland. Dynamite will follow. Terror will follow dynamite. Cruelty will follow terror. More dynamite will follow cruelty. Both sides will thus drive one another from atrocity to atrocity solely because we, the middle class, instead of interfering on behalf of justice, sit quaking and complying with ignorant and cowardly journalists who devote the first half of an article to calling the dynamitards "dastardly wretches," and the second half to clamoring for more dynamite in the shape of further restriction of our liberty and further license to our oppressors. If, on the other hand, the middle class will educate themselves to understand this question, they will be able to fortify whatever is just in Socialism, and to crush whatever is dangerous in it. No English government dare enact a Coercion Law or declare a Minor State of Siege against the Radical party. The result is that the Radical party never makes us shake in our shoes as the dynamitards do. I trust then that the Middle Class will raise the Socialists above the danger of Coercion, Minor Siege, and consequent Dynamite, by joining them in large numbers. When a Revolution approaches, those who are within the Revolutionary party can do something to avert bloodshed: those who hold aloof can only provoke it. A party informed at all points by men of gentle habits and trained reasoning powers may achieve a complete Revolution without a single act of violence. A mob of desperate sufferers abandoned to the leadership of exasperated sentimentalists and fanatic theorists may, at a vast cost of bloodshed and misery, succeed in removing no single evil, except perhaps the existence of the human race.

*It will be observed that, up to this point in his essay, Mr. Shaw, in favoring the abolition of private property in land and the prevention of the employment of the means of production as capital, has said nothing to show that he means this in any other sense than Proudhon and the Anarchists mean it,—nothing to show that he is a Communist or favors the methods of State Socialism. But this affirmation of the necessity of the "nationalization of rent" is distinctly State-Socialistic, and I am at a loss to know how Mr. Shaw reconciles it with the Anarchistic position taken by him not long ago in an article in the London "Anarchist."—*Editor Liberty.*

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